



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

MAR 23 2006

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
Office of the Assistant Secretary, Suite 600  
370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20447

The Honorable Phil Bredensen  
Governor of Tennessee  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0001

Dear Governor Bredensen:

I am writing to congratulate the State of Tennessee on the successful completion of its Program Improvement Plan (PIP) under the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR).

In June 2002, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted an on-site review of Tennessee's child welfare system and the resulting outcomes for children and families served by the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS). The purpose of the review was to determine Tennessee's conformity with the State Plan requirements of titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. Cases were examined to assess the safety, permanency and well-being of children in the sample. In addition to reviewing cases, Federal and State staff conducted community stakeholder interviews in three sites to assess the overall functioning of the system. As a result of the review findings, the DCS entered into a two-year PIP on July 1, 2003, and committed to making major systemic improvements to its child welfare system.

The ACF Region IV Office, along with ACF Children's Bureau staff, recently concluded that Tennessee successfully completed its PIP. To meet the requirements of its PIP, Tennessee not only had to complete all action steps and tasks leading to systems change, but also needed to meet established goals for improvement. For example, Tennessee met the goals of improvement based on the national data standards associated with child abuse and neglect in foster care, foster care re-entries, placement stability, length of time to achieve reunification and length of time to achieve adoption. Based on the successful completion of this PIP, ACF is hereby rescinding the associated CFSR penalties.

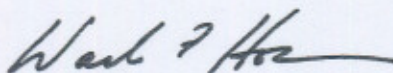
ACF once again wants to commend the State on the work done in the identification of funding streams and fiscal analysis, assessment, and simplification of the flex and needs assessment funding process. We see this as a promising approach that should be shared with other States and for which Tennessee should receive recognition. The Regional Office has taken steps to facilitate posting of this strategy on the Children's Bureau website as a promising approach. We will continue to partner with the State to accomplish this goal.



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ACF commends the State for its commitment and hard work. I would like to congratulate the entire Tennessee DCS staff, especially Dr. Viola P. Miller, Commissioner, DCS; Bonnie Hommrich, Deputy Commissioner, DCS; and Ms. Hommrich's staff, all of whom not only facilitated the success of the PIP, but also contributed to the State's progress towards system reform. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Harriet Epps, Child and Family Program Specialist, at 404-562-2909.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Wade F. Horn", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Wade F. Horn, Ph.D.  
Assistant Secretary  
for Children and Families

cc: Carlis V. Williams, Regional Administrator,  
ACF, Region IV  
Dr. Viola P. Miller, Commissioner, DCS